

Message Text

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17

ACTION DPW-01

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FM AMCONSUL UDORN

TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8087

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L UDORN 6066

SECSTATE ATTN: FRANK SIEVERTS OHA

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR; PINR

SUBJECT: MIA WIFE BOYLES INTERVIEWS PL DEFECTOR

1. MIA WIFE MRS. MARY BOYLES, ACCOMPANIED BY 21 YR OLD SON MARK, ARRIVED IN UDORN SEPTEMBER 15 TO INTERVIEW PATHET LAO (PL) DEFECTOR MAJOR SIMMA OUTHAMONTI (FORMERLY KNOWN AS MAJOR SIMMA PANSURIYAWONGSE) IN HOPES OF SECURING INFORMATION ABOUT FATE OF HER HUSBAND, RETIRED AIR FORCE LIEUTENANT COLONEL HOWARD BOYLES WHO HAS BEEN MISSING SINCE FEBRUARY 1973 WHEN C-123 HE WAS PILOTING FOR AIR AMERICA WAS SHOT DOWN NEAR THAKHEK, LAOS.

2. MRS. BOYLES SOUGHT ASSISTANCE OF CONSULATE'S LAO SPEAKING USAID REFUGEE OFFICER, WHO WAS SENIOR US REPRESENTATIVE IN UDORN AT TIME OF HER VISIT TO QUESTION MAJOR SIMMA WHO IS IN NONG KHAI REFUGEE CAMP 50 KILOMETERS NORTH OF UDORN. DURING MRS. BOYLES' VISIT CONSUL WAS TRAVELLING ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS IN LOEI PROVINCE AND VICE CONSUL WAS ON LEAVE.

3. ON SEPTEMBER 17 MRS. BOYLES, SON MARK AND USAID OFFICER TRAVELLED TO NONG KHAI TO INTERVIEW MAJOR SIMMA. HE WAS
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UNABLE TO PROVIDE HER WITH ANY USEFUL INFORMATION ABOUT HER

HUSBAND.

4. HOWEVER, DURING COURSE OF INTERVIEW, WHICH MRS. BOYLES RECORDED ON CASSETTE TAPE, MAJOR SIMMA CLAIMED THAT WHILE HE WAS A PRISONER IN PL PRISON CAMP IN SOUTHERN LAOS HE SAW FIFTEEN (15) US POWS IN HIS CAMP AS LATE AS JUNE 1973. HE ADDED THAT HE HAD PERSONALLY CAPTURED THREE (3) OF THESE PRISONERS FROM A DOWNED USAF F105 NEAR THAKHET, LAOS IN AUGUST, 1971. HE STATED THAT IN JULY 1973 HE MANAGED TO ESCAPE FROM CAMP AND DEFECT TO ROYAL LAOTIAN ARMY. AFTER COMMUNIST TAKEOVER HE FLED LAOS ENTERING NONG KHAI REFUGEE CAMP IN MAY 1975. (IN BANGKOK POST FEATURE NEWS STORY SEPTEMBER 24, 1973 MAJOR SIMMA IS REPORTED AS STATING THAT HE WAS IMPRISONED BY PL IN LAK KHETMO JAIL IN ATTAPEU PROVINCE DURING FIRST SEVEN MONTHS OF 1973 ON CHARGES OF TREASON AND DESERTION.)

5. MRS. BOYLES DEPARTED UDORN SEPTEMBER 19 FOR BANGKOK WHERE SHE PLANS TO SPEND SEVERAL DAYS BEFORE LEAVING FOR US. SHE REPORTEDLY PLANS TO VISIT JCRC REPRESENTATIVES IN HAWAII ENROUTE. USAID OFFICER WHO ASSISTED MRS. BOYLES SAID THAT WHILE SHE WAS CRITICAL OF USG EFFORTS TO FOLLOW UP MIA INFORMATION SHE DID NOT APPEAR TO HIM TO BE AN UNREASONABLE OR IRRESPONSIBLE PERSON. NONETHELESS WE THINK THAT SHE MAY BE STRONGLY TEMPTED UPON HER RETURN TO US TO USE MAJOR SIMMA'S RECORDED STATEMENT TO DRAMATIZE IN SOME FASHION HER CRITICISM OF USG PERFORMANCE ON MIA ISSUE. IF OPPORTUNITY PRESENTS ITSELF JCRC REPRESENTATIVES MAY WANT TO COUNSEL HER TO AVOID TAKING SUCH ACTION, PENDING FURTHER INVESTIGATION OF MAJOR SIMMA'S CLAIM.

6. CONSUL WILL BE TRAVELLING TO NONG KHAI ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS SEPTEMBER 22. SHOULD ADDRESSEE POSTS DESIRE I WILL BE HAPPY TO TRY TO QUESTION MAJOR SIMMA FURTHER REGARDING HIS CLAIM OF US POW SIGHTING MADE TO MRS. BOYLES.
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